(viii) The Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act 1996-[PESA—1996]

• It was agreed that action would be taken to ensure legislation or amendment of relevant Acts/Rules, to bring them in conformity with the provisions of the PESA, 1996, latest by 31.3.2002.

Amount sanctioned to voluntary organisations by CAPART

†1168. DR. MAHESH CHANDRA SHARMA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the voluntary organisations that have been sanctioned amounts by CAPART for rural development during 1999-2000 and 2000-2001; and

(b) the details of projects concerning the public programmes and the rural technology development programmes undertaken by these organisations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) and (b) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Making readymade garments sector viable

1169. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 83 lakh units of readymade garments employing almost 184 lakh workers are on the verge of closure due to imports from Bangladesh, China and Sri Lanka and excise hike;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action Government propose to take to make the readymade garments sector viable so as to save lakhs of workers engaged in the industry from loosing their jobs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) to (c) Though the import of readymade garments, have shown an increase, the total quantity imported is not significant. It is less than even 1% of our domestic garment consumption. As regards excise hike, the Government has exempted the readymade garment units registered as SSI from the levy of central excise for home clearance upto Rs. 1 crore in the case of woven garments. However, the import of garments is subject to levy of countervailing duties.

In order to assist the textile industry including readymade garment industry to face international competition, Government has been taking measures from time to time. Some of the initiatives taken in this regard are:—

(1) The Government has imposed a combination of *ad-valorem* and specific duty on "whichever is higher basis" on import of a number of textile items to safeguard the interest of domestic industry.

(2) Government is keeping a watch on the imports and would strive to ensure that imports do not cause any serious detriment or injury to the domestic industry. In case any unfair trade practices come to the notice, action, if necessary, under WTO provisions could be taken.

(3) A provision of Rs. 10 crores has been earmarked in the Budget 2001-02 for creating clusters of excellence, i.e., apparel parks for production and export of garments. Besides a provision of Rs. 15 crores has also been made for Scheme for improvement of infrastructure facilities at major textile production centres.

(4) The Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) has been made operational from 1-4-1999 to facilitate the modernisation and upgradation of this sector so that it can become more competitive in international trade. Inter Ministerial Committee to resolve the issues pertaining to assistance under TUFS has been constituted.

(5) Weaving, processing and garment machinery, which are covered under TUFS, have been extended the facility of accelerated depreciation at the rate of 50%.

(6) National Institute for Fashion Technology (NIFT), its six branches and Apparel Training & Design Centres (ATDCs) are running various courses/programmes to meet skilled manpower requirements of textile industry especially apparel in the field of design, merchandising and marketing.

(7) The import of a large number of garment machinery has been allowed under concessional custom duty of 5%.

(8) To prepare and sensitise our textile and garment industry to conform to the ecological requirements of importing countries by providing facilities by way of eco-testing laboratories.

Setting up a separate yarn depot in Sircilla, A.P.

1170. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether National Textile Corporation has set up a separate yarn depot in Sircilla in Karimnagar in Andhra Pradesh in order to ensure timely supply of cotton yarn for the powerloom weavers;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to open more such yarn depots in the State; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Cotton purchase scheme for next Five Years

†1171. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.